In this lack of accent we have an imperfection which we ought to cure by purifying our language, which is the most graceful ever known, and reducing it to fixed rules.

In Latin O is sometimes a mark of exclamation, and then it is pronounced and written with a grave accent, and sometimes, too, with an acute accent, as we can see in Juvenal, when he says:—

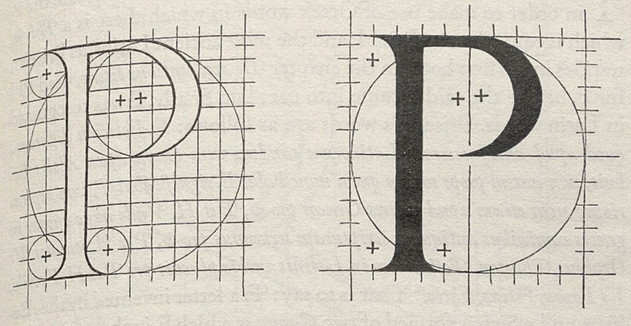
O` fortunatam natam me Consule Romam.*

* *Satire* x, 122.

And Budé in the first book of *De Asse,* the sixteenth folio in the Aldine print: *O` acre iudicium hominum, quibus tamen ipsis inter classica recitanteis Italos exaudire tantum vacauit.* Example when O is acute: Budé in the same book: *O´ tempora, O´ mores.*

In Greek and Latin, and in French too, O always stands alone, at least in the poets & orators, whatever meaning it may have; but I find it repeated even to the number of three in the second chapter of the Prophet Zechariah, where there is *O` O` O` fugite de terra Aquilonis, dicit dominus.* But, again, I find that the Latin text does not agree with the Greek text, for in the Latin there are three O's, and in the Greek two Ω's. Which I very gladly set down here to give warning to those who read the Bible, that they look well to the exactness of both. In the Greek text, there is, Ω` ω` φευγετε απο τησ βορρα λεγει Κυριοσ.† If I chose to discourse upon this passage, I could perchance say something worth while; but I will leave it to the theologians to do, to whom it belongs to reconcile the Holy Scripture and interpret it in its entirety. I, who in this book treat of letters, pass on, and come to my next letter of the alphabet, which is P.

† *The King James version has: 'Ho, ho, come forth and flee from the land of the North, saith the Lord.'—Zech.*, II, 6.



THE letter P here drawn, & formed from the I and the O, is seven units in breadth, and is derived from B by taking away the lower curve, and by cutting off the base of the remaining curve at a distance of two units from the upright leg, as you can see in the present figure. To make the P properly, five turns of the compass are necessary; I have marked the places where the point of the compass should be set to make them.

P Is three whole units higher than it is broad, and, as I have said, the end of its curve, which I have called the middle line, is cut off at a distance of two units from the leg. I repeat this by design because I find that those who attempt to describe the Attic letters almost always go astray herein: they make the said curve extend to the leg below as well as above, which should not be done.

P Says Martianus Capella, *labris spiritus erumpit.* P is pronounced with the voice issuing through closed lips, which can be understood from the figure of the said P. This P is of a surety derived from B, for there was formerly so great an affinity between them that B was very often written and said for P, as can be seen in the words Τριαμβοσ and *Triumphus;* Βυρροσ and *Pyrrhus;* Βυξοσ and *Pyxos,* whence *Pixides.* Whereof one can see ample proof in Priscian & other good Grammarians, & especially in a pleasant little treatise that Aldus has printed,* on the values of Greek and Latin letters and of the interchanges between them.

* *The 'pleasant little treatise' is printed at the end of the* 1507 *edition of Aldus's 'Grammatica' under the title, 'Grammaticis Græcæ Isagogæ.'*

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